

**TOWN OF NEWFIELDS SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2021**

Select Board Present: Jacquelyn Silvani & Michael Sununu

Absentee: Betsy Coes

Others Include: Mary Belanger, Jeff Buxton, George Drinkwater, Sue McKinnon, Lisa Soiett & Chief Wayne Young

Call to order at 7:00 pm.

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following items:

Checks Dated	11/19/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 1,627.96
Checks Dated	11/19/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 3,150.00
Checks Dated	11/24/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 6,731.04
Checks Dated	11/24/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 360.93
Checks Dated	11/30/21:	Payroll Manifest	\$ 18,885.35
Checks Dated	11/30/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$ 14,550.31
Checks Dated	12/03/21:	Accounts Payable Manifest	\$267,243.29

Fire Chief Buxton outlined a potential pay scale for the Fire department personnel. Currently, Newfields is voluntary. He expressed that the department is having difficulty getting coverage for calls. Many do not want to respond to calls in the middle of the night, or during the day when they are juggling work/family commitments. New State regulations constrain the department as well. These new regulations now require certification. This is a 180-hour program that many do not have the time to do, and if they do, they will move on to other stations where they receive pay. This pay scale would incentivize new recruits and help maintain the current personnel. The department just lost a person to retirement after 34 years of service. Many in the department are also getting older and will not be with the department for too much longer. Chief Buxton provided the Board with a 1 to 3 new member options. If the department was to have all three members providing coverage from day shifts, Monday – Friday, the cost was estimated at \$153,430. Chief Buxton only expects to have 1–2-member coverage which would reduce the estimate to a cost between \$60k–80k a year.

After further discussion, Chief Buxton and the Board agreed to increase the Fire departments budget by \$80k to compensate for this new pay scale. It will be implemented for a year and then revisited in the second year as Chief Buxton believes another solution will be necessary by then.

The Board signed Police Chief Young's appointment and his three-year contract effective 11/29/21 through 12/31/24. Chief Young then went on to discuss the 2022 budget for the police department. His permanent salary line showed an increase from \$248,144 to \$264,603. This is mostly due to the previously vacant Police Chief position and the need for another full-time position. Health benefits also went up in anticipation for the new full-time position once it is filled. Chief Young

decided on a flat 5% salary increase to bring the current positions up to fair market value and to incentivize retention.

Chief Young also advised the Board of the need for a new cruiser to replace the 2015 cruiser. The Board advised obtaining an invoice and encumbering the funds this year since this year's budget has more than enough funds to compensate for the new vehicle.

Chief Young and the Board discussed the Dispatch contract between Newfields and Newmarket. Newfields is currently in a three-year contract expiring in December 2023. Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to approve and sign the three-year service contract. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Michael then notified those in attendance that the Chief of Police Meet & Greet will be held on Wednesday, December 15th at 6:00pm at the Town Hall.

Sue McKinnon provided the 2022 executive budget to the Board. Her budget showed an overall increase of \$4k, representing a 3% increase over last year. This budget includes a 5% increase in wages but a decrease in health insurance. Elections are up \$5k to provide for the three upcoming elections in 2022. Stipends for poll workers increased due to the increased number of elections next year. Vital statistics went up due to the increase in the number of vital statistics requested by the residents. Financial administration is up \$5,400. The auditors are increasing their costs by \$5k. Sue suggested putting the audit out to bid. The Assessor's contract also increased. Planning and Zoning remained the same. Government buildings includes the cleaning, phone system and internet. Electricity and heating also increased. Michael advised Sue to move the Town Hall streaming costs to other general government expense line.

Michael informed Sue that the Town may do a transaction with the Water/Sewer department in lieu of rental fees. This may reduce the water/sewer charges for both the Town and Fire department to zero for ten years or so.

Sue and the Board also discussed the need for walkway maintenance and gutter cleaning. Miscellaneous expenses such as Waste Management, recycling, ambulance & welfare will be discussed at the next meeting on December 7th. The budget should be finalized on December 21st.

Sue informed the Board that the Budget Hearing will be on January 11th at 7:00pm, the Deliberative Session on February 8th at 7:00 and the Election on March 8th.

The Board then moved on to other business.

Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to approve the Equalization Data Certificate provided by the Assessor, Rod Wood. All were in favor and the motion carried. This form showed that the market value of properties in Newfields is much higher than the assessed value that is used for the tax rate. In 2023, the Town will do a revalue which will bring everyone's assessed value to 100% of market value. The Town is currently assessed at 79% of market value.

The Board deferred the Assessing contract until next meeting to allow time for Michael to speak with Rod Wood.

Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to sign the Tax Collector's Warrant in the sum of \$2,988,207.00. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to approve the intent to cut for Pawtucket Land Holdings, map 208 lots 14 & 15. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to approve the encumbrance request from the Cemetery Trustees for \$6,600. These funds are to pay for the scheduled removal of down/dead trees in the spring of 2022. All were in favor and motion carried.

Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to sign the 2022 Special Permit Application for Mosquito/Black Fly.

The Board signed two correspondence letters thanking two town Police Chiefs for their assistance during Police Chief Search.

The Board acknowledged correspondence from the Water District. This letter will be discussed at the December 7th meeting when the Water District will be in attendance.

Michael notified those in attendance that the Hilton historical marker has been received. The Garden Committee has asked to participate in the unveiling ceremony. Once a date has been decided, the Town will be notified.

Sue notified the Board that holder of the Boston Post cane, Vernon Glass, passed away over the weekend and a new person will need to be nominated.

The Board deferred reviewing November's revenue & expenses, and the 11/9/21 minutes, until the next meeting.

Michael notified Jacqui of the Planning Board's meeting on December 9th at 7:00pm to discuss the Great Bay General Permit that the Water & Sewer District and the requirements to adhere to that permit. This needs to be addressed by the Select & Planning Boards, the Road Agent, and the Water & Sewer District. This will mostly include collecting data and completing reports, but someone will need to accept responsibility for it. Michael encouraged Jacqui to attend the meeting.

At 8:33 pm, Michael motioned, seconded by Jacqui, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kisha Therrien